The EQUAL Times

The Newsletter of Equality Colorado

Winter '98
Vol. 6, No. 1

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Director's Cut YOU'VE GOT THE POWER!!!

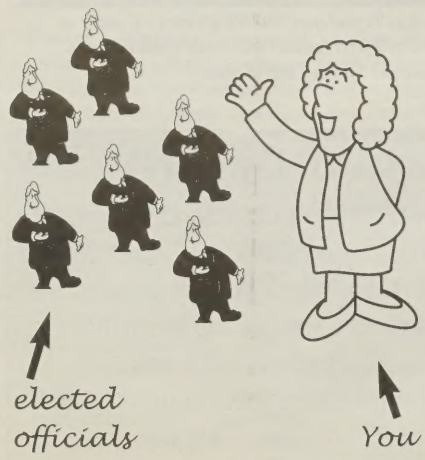
by Sue Anderson

ELECTIONS. VOTING. CONSTITUENT CONTACT. Representative democracy. What does it all mean? What it means is that we as voters and constituents put people in office or, at the least, have the *capability* to put people in office. It means that we have power.

We elect people to office and they are supposed to represent us. Even if we didn't vote for the person who won election in our district, our state, our country, they are still there to represent and listen to the interests of *all* of their constituents. Clearly this isn't always the case in practice, but it is a theory and one that we should utilize to create change at the legislative level.

Many elected officials tell me that they hear from very few of their constituents. At the state level, if they get ten to fifteen letters or calls on a subject, that's a lot. There are always exceptional issues where they get far more than that number — usually around a social issue that has become polarized and has sparked input from various groups. As constituents and voters, we can influence how our legislators think about issues by talking to them. They are relatively accessible people, especially to voters from their district and even more so to voters in their district who are of the same political party.

Talking to elected officials *can* make a difference. Telling our stories *can* change minds. Many legislators have little experience or information regarding gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender issues. They are susceptible to all the myths and stereotypes that the rest of society is. Following are some important points about communicating with your elected officials. Think about what you can do and how *you* can take the power.



Seven Steps to Using Your Power

1. **Get to know your legislators.** As a constituent, you are the most effective lobbyist because you represent countless others in your district. Grassroots power is the ultimate power.

2. **Be polite.** In the state legislature, more than 500 bills are considered in every January-May session. If your legislator seems preoccupied, it's because s/he is. Many legislators will return phone calls promptly, but because of their overwhelming work load, some will be content to listen to your detailed voice mail and call you back only if they have additional questions.

3. **Be on alert** during the legislative session, January through May. When there is a specific committee or

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INSIDE: p. 5 Breakfast, Lunch & Lobby • Issue Update
p. 6-7 List of Legislators • p. 8 "It's the Suburbs, Stupid"

Happy Birthday to Equality Colorado!

Highlights from 5 Years of Organizing *by Kris Kailey*

Equality TiMeLine

This January, 1998, we are celebrating half a decade in our fight for equality and justice for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender Coloradans. What follows are highlights from the first five years.

1994 **Equality Colorado forms.** In the wake of Amendment 2, a group of longtime activists from the GLBT community recognize a need to create and build a movement for long-term advocacy and change for our population. Sue Anderson, Tony Ogden and Lawrence Pacheco become co-directors of the newly created EC. A transition team consisting of activists in the community and other interested parties serve as an oversight body charged with forming EC and setting goals for the organization. During this period, over 150 groups form in Colorado as a reaction to Amendment 2. Few survive. Equality Colorado does. The first year is spent establishing and grounding the organization, working through the "hows" of legislative activity, building community outreach and education, working on community healing, doing media advocacy, and holding community forums.

1995 • **January** Equality Colorado is born. • **February** The first edition of *The Equal Times* is published. • EC and Ground Zero of Colorado Springs co-host Legislative Information Day. • **March** EC, Ground Zero, and the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force host "Fight the Right," a Strategy and Networking Conference to provide activists with a perspective on the radical right. • **August** EC co-sponsors the first Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Youth Day, culminating in a rally at the State Capitol Building. • **October** EC begins hosting monthly community forums dedicated to GLBT civil rights issues.

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Upcoming Events

See p. 10 for more!

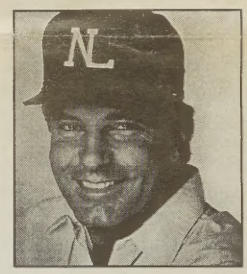
MLK Day Jan. 19

(See p. 9)

Town Meeting Planned

LOBBY DAY

Friday, Jan. 23 (see p. 5)



State Capitol & Central Presbyterian Church • Trainings • Luncheon featuring former Major League Baseball Umpire Dave Pallone.

COLORADO XPLOSION

(see p. 2)

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TiMeLine

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1 9 9 4 **Equality gets a mission.** A board is seated, a mission statement is developed and political spinoff groups, such as EPAC and Equality Lobby are formed. EC provides technical assistance, trainings and workshops for activists and community groups, as well as meeting with Governor Romer and other officials around GLBT issues and working with corporations to help develop non-discrimination policies and domestic partnership benefits.

• **January** An official board of directors is seated, transferring oversight responsibility from the transition team. • **April** Sue Anderson assumes the role of Executive Director. • Voices of Faith, a spiritual support program for the GLBT community, is established. • At the annual Colorado PTA meeting, there is an attempt to promote equality and tolerance in schools. EC organizes to ensure a strong presence for the GLBT community, but the proposition is defeated. • **May** Equality's Mission Statement is adopted. It reads, *Equality Colorado's mission is to work to secure equality and justice for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people. We seek to create an environment where people are respected, open dialogue is encouraged and the truth is spoken about the diversity of our family and sexual identities. We work for social change and an understanding of the interrelationship between communities.* • **July** The Colorado Human Rights Action Council (CHRAC) and Equality Colorado merge to form ECHRAC, later Equality Lobby, a separate program for legislative lobbying and public policy. ECHRAC became a recognized IRS entity. EPAC, a separate entity responsible for candidate endorsement, is also formed. • **October** EC co-sponsors, with the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, the *Out and Equal in the 90's* conference, a national workplace conference for 350 participants from over 50 corporations. • EPAC distributes its first Statewide Voter's Guide to educate voters on candidates supporting GLBT issues.

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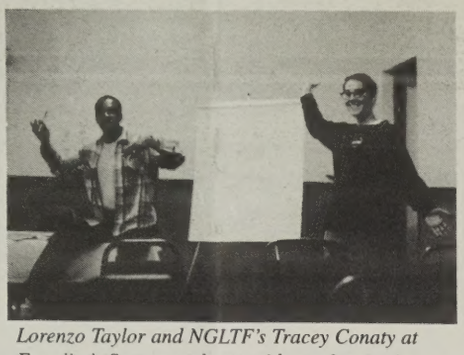
"Justice. Now."



Lorenzo Taylor and NGLTF's Tracey Conaty at Equality's first annual statewide conference in Glenwood Springs last October.

Celebration '98

Over 100 people attended 5 parties to celebrate Equality Colorado and the New Year. From a pajama party to a tour of the Art Museum; a bowling party and some champagne, a great time was had by all! Thanks to all who celebrated with us.

EQUITY FUND

Don't forget about Equality Colorado's Major Donor program! Invest in Equality's future with the Equity Fund.

What is the Equity Fund?
The Equity Fund is an innovative giving program designed to provide a vitally needed, stable funding base for the work of Equality Colorado.

Call Equality at (303) 839-5540 for more about the Equity Fund!

Equality Colorado Group Night at the Colorado Xplosion

Sunday, February 1, 1998
5:00 p.m. • McNichols Arena

Colorado's own professional women's basketball team will play host to the New England Blizzard -- and you're invited.

Tickets are $13 -- a portion of each ticket sold goes to benefit Equality Colorado. To order your tickets, call Equality Colorado at (303) 839-5540 or email us at EqualityCo@aol.com.

And join us for our pre-game party... at the Xplosion offices! Cost for both the party and the game are just $25!

Yes! I want to support Equality Colorado's work to secure equality for all....no exceptions.

Name_____ Phone_____

Address_____

City, State, Zip_____

❑ I am interested in Equality's Equity Fund sustainer giving program. Please send me information.

❑ I would like to make a donation of:
___$25 ___$50 ___$75 ___$100 other $_____

Checks should be made payable to *Equality Colorado*, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization to which contributions are tax-deductible OR you can charge your donation to your:

VISA or MasterCard (circle one) Card #_____

Expiration date:_____ Signature_____

Return to: Equality Colorado, PO Box 300476, Denver, CO 80203 (303) 839-5540

The Equal Times is the quarterly newsletter of Equality Colorado. Equality Colorado's mission is to work to secure equality and justice for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people. We seek to create an environment where people are respected, open dialogue is encouraged and the truth is spoken about the diversity of our families and sexual identities.

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Voices of Faith

by Rev. Laurene Lafontaine

Understanding "Ex-Gay" Christian Ministries

"I just don't fit anywhere. The gay community rejects me because I don't want to be homosexual. The church rejects me because I am homosexual. I just want to belong somewhere."

I HEARD THIS REVEALING COMMENT while talking with a leader of a local "ex-gay ministry." While the religious right wing is promoting supposed "change" or "ex-gay" ministries as a way to be inclusive, it is important to examine the context in which new rhetoric emerges. Every major Christian denomination is having to deal with the reality and presence of gays and lesbians. Out of this reality, a shift in language about gays and lesbians is emerging in both the church and society. *(In this article, I am specifically addressing gays and lesbians and Christianity. The presence of bisexuals and transgender persons present an unique challenge for the religious right wing when attempting to discuss re-orientation programs. Non-Christians present yet another challenge to these ministries, since all current ministries are based on the "personal transformational" nature of Jesus Christ).*

Over the past decade, there has been a dramatic shift of attitudes. As more and more people have come out either as gay or lesbian, or as a parent, relative, or friend of a gay or lesbian person, attitudes change. The "issue" is now personed and there is a face to go with the word gay or lesbian. With attitudes within the church shifting, no longer is the hostile rhetoric as acceptable.

In my experience with the Presbyterians, I have seen a shift in language. At the General Assembly in 1991, statements were made and affirmed that "homosexual orientation was not a gift from God, it was a sign of a fallen humanity." Yet, in 1996, one of the leaders of the Presby right wing, Dr. Rev. Roberta Hestenes said "Sexual orientation is not a sin, it is not a sin to be homosexual. The sin is the practice of homosexual behavior." The notion of "accepting" gay and lesbians to appear inclusive and even Christian, yet rejecting same sex behavior, is being echoed in many denominations as well as para-church groups such as the Promise Keepers, Focus on the Family, and the Christian Coalition. It is out of this context that so-called "ex-gay ministries" are gaining more recognition.

The religious right wing will continue to be responsible for the untold number of suicides and destroyed lives caused by their ministries.

EX-GAY MINISTRIES HAVE BEEN AROUND since the 1970's. The effort to change someone's sexual orientation has been documented at least since 1892 where a Dr. Graeme M. Hammond prescribed "severe and fatiguing bicycle riding" for a 24 year old man and "found that the man's sexual appetite was thereby abolished" mainly due to fatigue. (Timothy Murphy, PhD, "Redirecting Sexual Orientation: Techniques and Justifications" The Journal of Sex Research, Vol. 29, No. 4, Nov. 1992, p. 502) This athletic technique is often used for gay men who "just need physical activity" to help them discover their "masculine" side. A former ex-gay I know, Scott S. often tells of how he was taught to play basketball through his ex-gay ministry group and now he is happily gay AND can play a great game of hoops! Of course, this probably won't work well with lesbians, well, because you know, we tend to be very athletic! Lest we feel left out, the approach used for lesbians is the encouragement to wear make-up and dresses! Don't laugh, there is an "ex-lesbian" group in Greeley that actually does just that!

The conversion-therapy movement is a coming together of a conservative religious perspective with a '50s and '60s psycho-analytical perspective.

Changing one's sexual orientation has been attempted through various techniques: the aforementioned behavioral therapy, electrical shock therapy, chemical aversive therapy, drug and hormone therapy, surgery, and psychotherapy. And what has come of these attempts is the reality that sexual orientation does not change. Both the American Medical Association (AMA) and American Psychological Association (APA) have long ago stopped treating same-sex orientation as a disorder. This past summer, the APA reiterated its longstanding official position that homosexuality and bisexuality are not mental disorders. It also passed a resolution on appropriate therapeutic responses to sexual orientation issues. Included in the resolution is that psychologists must be truthful with clients about the scientific and clinical bases for the treatment they provide. For a complete text of the resolution, see the APA web page: http://www.apa.org.

Given the clinical and scientific realities, there is only a small group of physicians and psychotherapists who persist in treating same sex orientation as a condition and disorder. Their studies have not been verified through independent research. The numbers of "successful" changes are not verifiable. The basis for so-called change ministries or conversion therapy is not clinical and scientific, but rests solely on religious understandings of "what is natural" for humanity and a particular biblical interpretation. "Clinton Anderson, staff liaison for the APA's Committee on Lesbian and Gay Affairs, describes the conversion-therapy movement as a 'coming together of a conservative religious perspective with a '50's and '60 psychoanalytical perspective.'" ("Can sexual orientation change with therapy?" by Randall Edwards, from the APA Monitor, APA web page)

SO WHAT DOES THIS MEAN for the gay or lesbian person desiring to be a part of a Christian community? It's a Catch-22. Even though the scientific evidence supports the fact that sexual orientation can not be changed, some religious leaders continue to preach that it can. Therefore if the gay or lesbian person is to be an active and acceptable member of that community of faith, they need to be "transformed" by Jesus Christ into living a heterosexual life or have the gift of celibacy *imposed* upon them. As students of history, we know that the church can take a position on scientific knowledge and be wrong. Just ask Galileo.

Beside this fact, this attempt to be "inclusive" of gays and lesbians is conditional. The message is "we accept you only if you deny your feelings, who God created you to be and be who we deem to be acceptable." The other reality is that there are many faithful gay and lesbian people who are happy and well adjusted. The struggling person is caught between two realities. Often times, the religious messages of shame, guilt and alienation simply override the possibility of a positive same sex experience.

LET'S RETURN TO MY FRIEND who is struggling to belong. Some churches reward those so-called ex-gays by giving them leadership opportunities within the church. Giving them a sense of belonging and a place at the table. Who, after all, doesn't what to belong? Most denominations have a shaky practice of welcoming gay and lesbians who embrace their sexuality as God's good gift. There are only a handful of local congregations here in Colorado who sincerely welcome and unconditionally affirm gay and lesbian persons. For the person struggling with their sexuality within an evangelical and conservative congregation, they are not welcomed if they positively affirm their orientation. And the greatest irony is that often, once they "return to the fold," these ex-gays still must confront the homophobia that comes from their gender non-conformity and their gay past. Still, people are willing to struggle for years and years to be an ex-gay.

The paradigm of struggle is impossible to resolve if one believes that to be homosexual is sin, homosexual behavior and thoughts are worse than sin and one's sexual orientation can't change. I have had a number of survivors of ex gay ministries talk about the shame and sense of failure they experienced when it became clear after years of trying to change, that change didn't happen. They felt like they failed at being ex-gay and Christian. There was an inherent sense that something was wrong with them and even God could not fix it.

THE QUESTION OF FIXING IT — fixing one's sexual orientation — is the wrong question. Why fix something that is not broken? Yet, the struggle is present because of the mixed messages from religious communities. The third paragraph from the statement policy of the National Association of Research and Therapy of Homosexuality (NARTH) highlights the

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Upcoming VOF Workshops

"Integrating our Sexuality and Spirituality: An Interfaith Perspective."
Saturday, January 31, 9:00 am - 1:00 pm. Call Laurene for location and to register, (303) 839-5540, ext. 3. This workshop will address topics such as the difference between religion and spirituality, understanding God and oneself, the role of forgiveness and ritual, and developing a healthy spirituality.

"Spirituality and Relationships"
Saturday, Feb. 14th, 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 pm. Call Laurene for location and to register, (303) 839-5540, ext. 3. This workshop will explore the interaction and impact of our spirituality upon our primary relationships.

Anti-Violence Project

New Director, New Direction

by Kris Kailey

The Anti-Violence Project of Equality Colorado has a new director. Rebecca Buretta took leadership of the Project on December 1, 1997, when former director Michelle Drea resigned to pursue other challenges. Rebecca brings to the job a wealth of experience and knowledge in domestic violence counseling and victims' services, along with new and exciting ideas for expanding the AVP. Rebecca is a 1996 graduate of the University of New Mexico, where she majored in Criminology and minored in Women's Studies with an emphasis on domestic violence. She completed an internship at a battered women's shelter in New Mexico and went through police cadet training, accompanying the District Attorney to the scene of domestic violence crimes. She has worked as a lawyer's assistant, a counselor for battered women, and, most recently, as the Domestic Violence Consultant for the Mayor's Human Rights and Community Relations Department for the City and County of Denver. She also staffed Denver's Domestic Violence Task Force. Before being hired for her current position, Rebecca was employed part-time for Equality Colorado as Volunteer Coordinator before being hired for her current position.

In 1998, Rebecca will work on her expanded vision for the AVP. A primary goal, states Rebecca, is "maintaining the wonderful job that Michelle did, especially with trainings in the police departments, in the District Attorneys' offices, and for service providers. The requests (for training) continue to come in." She also plans to establish support groups for victims of domestic violence, beginning with a co-ed group with co-facilitators and adding separate groups for lesbians and gay men. Rebecca states that "support groups have historically had a low turnout," so she hopes to expand community outreach to make victims aware of the service. "There is a growing need in the (GLBT) community for this service," says Rebecca. "But people do not want to admit that this (domestic violence) happens. The victims may blame themselves and be afraid to report."

Domestic violence accounts for the majority of calls received by the AVP each month. But Rebecca feels positive about the future of programs for victims. "The domestic violence community in general has grown, shelters have grown, domestic violence is more acknowledged in general, so more emphasis can be put on same-sex domestic violence."

Another area of focus is an aggressive outreach to victims of hate crimes. "We want to promote reporting — even for those who don't need counseling services," says Rebecca. "We're going to update our posters and make sure all police departments know that we're a resource for hate crime victims."

"The domestic violence community in general has grown, shelters have grown, domestic violence is more acknowledged in general, so more emphasis can be put on same-sex domestic violence."

Other goals for Rebecca include a new volunteer training class in the spring. She hopes to add three to five volunteers and a student intern. Rebecca and current volunteers provide 24-hour crisis intervention for GLBT victims of any violent crime, including hate crimes and sexual assault. Intervention can include counseling, information and referral and support and assistance with legal matters, including obtaining a restraining order, and testifying in court. Rebecca also plans to have a half-time assistant in 1998, which will help her to expand and support the AVP program. Rebecca is excited about her new role with the AVP and is looking forward to the coming year. She states, "Thank you to everyone (at Equality Colorado) for being receptive and supportive of my transition to director."

The AVP works with GLBT victims of all violent crimes, including hate crimes, domestic violence and sexual assault. If you would like to volunteer for the AVP, or would like to make a financial contribution, please call Equality Colorado at (303) 839-5540. If you are the victim of a violent crime and need help, or to report incidents of violence, call the 24-hour crisis hotline number at (303) 852-5094.

TiMeLine

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1995 **"Voices" gets louder**. The Activist News begins publication. EC convened three statewide meetings of activists to plan strategies around Amendment 2 and forged an affiliate relationship with the Common Decency Coalition in Grand Junction. In addition, EC sponsored six community forums on domestic partnership, same-sex marriage, racism and legislative issues. We worked with activists to organize vigils in response to Colorado for Family Values' "Time to Stand" seminars and co-organized a workshop on pastoral care and Amendment 2.

• **January** EC organizes with other groups to endorse the Hate Crimes Bill in the Colorado Legislature. The bill failed in the House Finance Committee. • **April** The Colorado Marriage Rights Project, a group working for equal marriage rights, is created. • **May** EC organizes with AIDS service providers to form the Ryan White CARE Act Coalition, dedicated to educating the community and elected officials about the importance of passing the Ryan White CARE Act. • The first annual *Claiming the Spirit: Uniting Faith, Rights and Sexuality* conference is held, sponsored by Voices of Faith. • **August** EC sponsors the first Golfing for Justice tournament. • **October** EC co-sponsors a Vigil for Justice and Town Meeting with guests

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"Ex-Gays" cont. from p. 3

dilemma of many people. *"As clinicians, we have witnessed the intense suffering that homosexuality often causes the individual. Tragic consequences result from the psychological conflict leading to homosexuality. Anguish in the homosexual is compounded by distress experienced by his or her family, friends, and other loved ones."* (NARTH Web site: http://www.narth.com/statement.html)

NARTH believes that homosexuality is the cause of the intense suffering and distress. They are flat out wrong. The cause of suffering and distress experienced by gay and lesbian people throughout the centuries is homophobia and heterosexism. Those proponents of ex-gay ministries and a religious culture that uses flawed evidence are only causing more harm. The ex-gay movement will continue to be ***used*** by the religious right wing. The religious right wing will continue to be responsible for the untold number of suicides and destroyed lives caused by their ministries. Moderate and liberal people of faith must take responsibility as well — by challenging the lies of ex-gay ministries and the misuse of people struggling to come to terms with their sexuality. It is time for moderate and liberal communities of faith to provide safe environments for all people struggling with sexuality issues. And for our gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender communities, we need to be ready to welcome with open arms those who painfully struggle with sexual orientation issues. Our hope is that each person comes to experience himself or herself as who God has created him or her to be, whether heterosexual, gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender.

Next issue, we will hear the experiences of people who have survived ex gay ministries and now live happily as ex-ex gays; and we'll take a more detailed look at local and national ex gay ministries.

HAVE YOU BEEN DISCRIMINATED AGAINST?

CLIP

Colorado Legal Initiatives Project

PO Box 300397
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The Legal Arm of the GLBT Community

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- Gay Literature
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- CD ROMs
- New & Used Videos
- T-shirts and other accessories

Legislature '98

Breakfast, Lunch, & LOBBY

Equality Colorado's **4nd Annual** Lobby Day
Friday, January 23, 1998

Last year, over 50 activists from around the state joined us at the Colorado State Capitol for a day of trainings & meetings with legislators. Thanks to that effort, we were able to accomplish more during the 1997 legislative session than ever before. This year's event will be even better!

In the morning, we'll sponsor a **legislative breakfast** -- an opportunity to meet and connect with your state senators and representatives over coffee, juice and pastries. We'll also feature a **legislative training** featuring information on how the legislature works, a tour of the capitol, and issue updates. The $5 registration fee for the morning includes breakfast and training materials.

Following this, come to our first-ever **legislative luncheon**, featuring Dave Pallone. Dave is a former Major League Baseball umpire and best-selling author of *Behind the Mask: My Double Life in Baseball.* The luncheon will begin at 12:30 that afternoon, and will be catered by the Women's Bean Project. The site is Central Presbyterian Church at 17th and Sherman St., just 2 blocks north of the capitol. The cost is only $15 if you register by January 16 ($20 after the 16th, $25 at the door).

Scholarships for Lobby Day ARE available, no questions asked.

Itinerary of the day

7:30 - 9:00 **Legislative Breakfast** — *2nd floor of Capitol, outside Old Supreme Court Chamber.* Open to anyone — those who've already attended a Lobby Day or Legislative Training Session are encouraged to join us here.

8:00 - 9:00 **Colorado General Assembly 101** — *Capitol basement.* A nuts & bolts presentation on how a bill becomes a law, how the legislature works, and effective ways to interact with your elected officials.

9:00 - 10:30 Floor **proceedings and tour of the Capitol.**

11:00 **Issue updates** — *Central Presbyterian Church, 17th & Sherman.* Updates on current bills and Q&A with legislators.

12:30 - 2:00 **Luncheon** — *Central Presbyterian Church.* Keynote speaker Dave Pallone , catered by the Women's Bean Project).

Issue update

Hate Crimes

Once again, we will be supporting a bill that would add sexual orientation, along with age and disabilities, to the categories covered by Colorado's Ethnic Intimidations Act. We would also change the name of the offense to Hate Crime. Unlike the last two years, this year we'll be introducing the bill in the State House, with Rep. Penfield Tate (D-Denver) as lead sponsor. The law states that if a crime is committed, and bias can be proven as the motivating factor, then additional penalties can be imposed in the sentence. (Despite what Colorado for Family Values states, mere anti-gay rhetoric will not be made illegal). Last year, the bill passed the Senate and survived its first committee hearing in the House, only to be killed in the House Appropriations Committee.

Civil Rights

Last year, for the first time in over 20 years, a bill was introduced in the legislature to ban sexual orientation discrimination throughout the state. It was introduced by Rep. Gloria Leyba (D-Denver) and covered employment only. This year, Rep. Leyba will again be sponsoring a civil rights bill; but this time, the bill will cover employment, housing, and public accommodations. This is one of the conclusions reached through Equality's series of Legislative Planning Days last summer. Last year, the bill died by one vote in the House Business Affairs Committee.

Domestic Partnership

There are no immediate plans to introduce a Domestic Partnership bill this year. However, the Governor's commission on the Rights and Responsibilities of same-sex couples has been charged with looking at the situation for gay and lesbian couples in the state and coming up with policy responses. It's not yet clear if the commission will have time to make any recommendations before the legislative session ends.

Needle Exchange

One of the key bills that Equality supports is one that would allow needle-exchange programs to exist in Colorado. We see these programs as a key element in attacking the spread of HIV and other blood-borne diseases. Though last year's bill died on the House floor, this year it will begin in the Senate, with Sen. Dottie Wham (R-Denver) as the lead sponsor.

Lobby Day '98 Registration Form

Name:

Organization:
if applicable

Address:

City/State/ZIP:

Phone (home/work):

Email:

SIGN ME UP FOR... | **# reg. x cost = total**

☐ Legislative training activities. _____ x $5 = _____

☐ Legislative luncheon. *Early bird* _____ x $15 = _____

After Jan. 16 _____ x $20 = _____

☐ I want to make the following additional donation to support Equality's work in the state legislature: $ ____

☐ I need a scholarship for Lobby Day.
Here's what I can pay: $ ____

Total amount: $ _____

METHOD OF PAYMENT

☐ Check enclosed payable to **Equality Colorado**

☐ Credit card (Visa or MasterCard only)

Number:

Expiration:

Name as it appears on card:

Signature:

Mail this to Equality Colorado, PO Box 300476, Denver, CO 80203 or if paying by credit card, fax to (303) 839-1361. Call us at (303) 839-5540 or email equalityco@aol.com.

PARKING

Parking will be difficult. You can:

- **Park at a lot** -- usually costs between $3 - $4.
- **Take the Colfax bus.** (You can park at the Equality office at Colfax & Lafayette for 50¢).
- If luncheon only, there are **two-hour meters and free parking spaces** nearby.

Will the radical right strike again?

For the last two years, Equality has mobilized our activists to fight against attacks on the rights of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender folks in the legislature. We expect this year to be no exception. In fact, given that 1998 is such an important election year, it's quite likely that some will use anti-gay legislation to impress particularly conservative constituencies. Here are some possible bills:

- **Anti-marriage bill.** Rep. Marilyn Musgrave (R-Ft. Morgan) is likely to introduce yet another bill to ban legal same-sex marriages in Colorado — despite previous vetoes and Governor Romer's commission. A positive decision could come down from Hawaii before the legislature closes, which could give the bill even more momentum.
- **Anti-domestic partnership bill.** Last year we faced Sen. Ben Alexander's (R-Montrose) bill which would have banned public colleges and universities from granting domestic partner benefits to their gay and lesbian employees. We could see something similar this year.
- **Anti-adoption bill.** With the recent ruling in New Jersey affirming the ability of same-sex couples to adopt children, many states will try to pass laws banning such practices. Colorado could well be included in that list of states.

Legislature '98

Colorado State Senators

Colorado Senate
State Capitol
Denver, CO 80203

Democrats (303) 866-4865
Fax: (303) 866-4543

Republicans (303) 866-4866
Fax: (303) 866-2012

Senate President - Tom Norton
Senate Majority Leader - Jeff Wells
Senate Minority Leader - Mike Feeley

Name (party) District Counties served
Address
Capitol Phone Home phone

Ament, Don (R) 1 NE Colo. counties
Route 1 Box 142, Iliff 80736
Cap: 866-4866 Res: (970) 522-8205

Rizzuto, James (D) 2 SE Colo.
Box 215, La Junta 81050
JBC: 866-2587 • Cap: 866-4865 • Denv. Res: 394-4018 • Bus: (719) 384-4465 • Res: (719) 384-8388

Thiebaut, Bill (D) 3 Pueblo
PO Box 262, Pueblo 81002
Cap: 866-4865 Res: (719) 544-3822

Chlouber, Ken (R) 4 Central Colorado
220 W. 8th, Leadville 80461
Cap: 866-4866 Res: (719) 486-0008

Dennis, Gigi (R) 5 San Juan Valley
247 E. Idaho Spgs Dr., Pueblo West 81007
Cap: 866-4866 Res: (719) 547-9330

Alexander, Ben (R) 6 SW Colo.
PO Box 1285, Montrose 81402
Cap: 866-4866 Res: (970) 249-3211

Bishop, Tilman (R) 7 Mesa
2697 G Road, Grand Junction 81506
Cap: 866-3077 Res: (970) 242-9230
Denver Res: 399-7766

Wattenberg, Dave (R) 8 NW Colo.
Drawer 797, Walden 80480
Cap: 866-4866 Res: (970) 723-4577

Duke, Charles (R) 9 El Paso
1711 Woodmoor Dr., Monument 80132
Cap: 866-4866 Res: (719) 481-9289

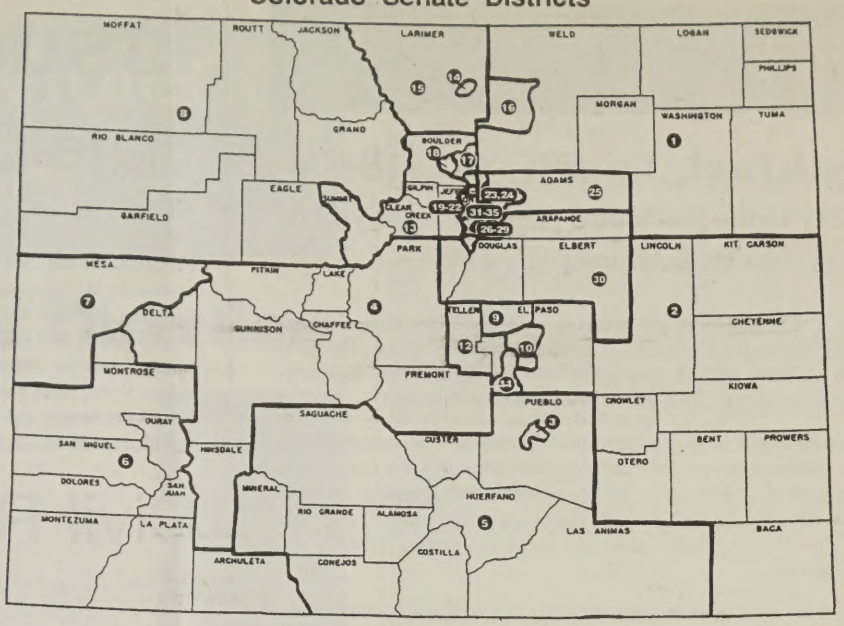
Powers, Ray (R) 10 El Paso
5 N. Marksheffel Rd., Colorado Springs, 80929
Cap: 866-4866 Res: (719) 596-1055
Fax: (719) 596-2301 Denver Res: 329-6926

Wells, Jeffrey (R) 11 El Paso
3166 Oak Creek Drive E., Colo. Springs 80906
Cap: 866-3341 Bus: (719) 471-4110

Tebedo, MaryAnne 12 El Paso, Teller
1916 Snyder Ave., Colorado Springs, 80909
Cap: 866-4880 Res: (719) 471-2561

Hopper, Sally (R) 13 Boulder, Jefferson
21649 Cabrini Blvd. Clear Creek, Gilpin
Golden 80401 Summit
Cap: 866-4873 Res: 526-0785

Colorado Senate Districts



Reeves, Peggy (D) 14 Larimer
1931 Sandalwood Ln., Ft. Collins, 80526
Cap: 866-4865 Res: (970) 482-8952

Matsunaka, Stan (D) 15 Larimer
2881 N. Monroe, Loveland 80538
Cap: 866-4865 Res: (970) 635-0384

Norton, Tom (R) 16 Weld
1204 50th Ave., Greeley 80634
Cap: 866-3342

Phillips, Terry (D) 17 Boulder
597 Manorwood Ln., Louisville 30027
Cap: 866-4866 • Res: 666-9488

Rupert, Dorothy (D) 18 Boulder
680 Yale Rd., Boulder 80303
Cap: 866-4872 Res: 494-0568

Congrove, Jim (R) 19 Jefferson
PO Box 357, Arvada 80001
Cap: 866-4866 • Bus: 851-8729 • Res: 940-1919

Perlmutter, Ed (D) 20 Jefferson
370 17th St. #2600, Denver, 80202
Cap: 866-4865 • Res: 278-8426

Feeley, Michael (D) 21 Jefferson
13486 W. Center Dr., Lakewood 80228
Cap: 866-4865 Res: 987-1354

Schroeder, Bill (R) 22 Jefferson
4420 S. Braun Ct., Morrison 80465
Cap: 866-4866 • Bus: 688-3100 x272 • Res: 697-8321

Arnold, Ken (R) 23 Adams, Boulder
10187 Julian Way, Westminster 80030
Cap: 866-4866 Res: 466-2666

Johnson, Joan (D) 24 Adams
7951 York St. #3, Denver 80229
Cap: 866-4863 Res: 288-9237

Martinez, Bob (D) 25 Adams
6462 E. 63rd Ave., Commerce City 80022
Cap: 866-4865 Res: 287-8111

Blickensderfer, Tom (R) 26 Arapahoe, Jefferson
9 Parkway Dr. Englewood 80110
JBC: 866-2587 Res: 758-0146

Coffman, Mike (R) 27 Arapahoe
PO Box 440740, Aurora 80044
Cap: 866-4883 • Bus: 671-6402 • Res: 766-0918

Lacy, Elsie (R) 28 Arapahoe
11637 E. Mexico Ave., Aurora 80012
JBC: 866-2587 • Cap: 866-4866 • Res: 750-5943

Weddig, Frank (D) 29 Arapahoe
15818 E. 8th Circle, Aurora 80011
Cap: 866-4865 Res: 366-8762

Mutzebaugh, Richard (R) 30 Arapahoe, Douglas
9965 S. Wyecliff Dr. Elbert, Jefferson
Highlands Ranch 80126
Cap: 866-4866 Res: 791-4063

Linkhart, Doug (D) 31 Denver
38 S. Clarkson St., Denver 80209
Cap: 866-4865 Res: 733-3569

Pascoe, Pat (D) 32 Denver
744 Lafayette St., Denver 80218
Cap: 866-4865 Res: 832-8865

Tanner, Gloria (D) 33 Denver
2150 Monaco Pky., Denver 80207
Cap: 866-4864 • Bus: 388-2260 • Res: 355-7288

Hernandez, Rob (D) 34 Denver
4600 W. 36th Ave., Denver 80212
Cap: 866-4865 Res: 458-1011

Wham, Dottie (R) 35 Arapahoe, Denver
2790 S. High St., Denver 80210
Cap: 866-4866 Res: 757-0615

Colorado State Representatives

Colorado House of Representatives
State Capitol • Denver, CO 80203
Phone: (303) 866-2904 • Fax: (303) 866-2291

House Speaker - Chuck Berry
House Maj. Leader - Norma Anderson
House Minority Leader - Carol Snyder

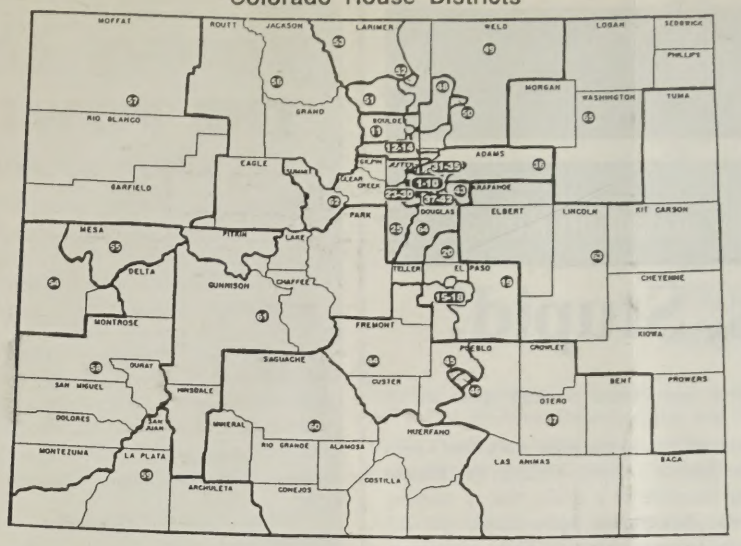
Faatz, Jeanne (R) 1 Denver, JeffCO
2903 S. Quitman St., Denver 80236
Cap: 866-2966 Res: 935-6915

Leyba, Gloria (D) 2 Denver
1014 Lipan St., Denver 80204
Cap: 866-2911 Res: 623-5676

Veiga, Jennifer (D) 3 Denver, Arapahoe
765 S. Grant St., Denver 80209
Cap: 866-02921 • Res: 722-4940 • Bus: 863-7700

Mace, Frana (D) 4 Denver
4990 Green St., Denver 80221
Cap: 866-2954 Res: 433-5093

Colorado House Districts



Chavez, Nolbert (D) 5 Denver
4619 Tejon St., Denver 80211
Cap: 866-2925 Res: 477-7426

Grossman, Daniel (D) 6 Arapahoe, Denver
450 Dahlia St., Denver 80220
Cap: 866-2015 Res: 355-4219

Clarke, Benjamin (D) 7 Denver
1800 Monaco Pky., Denver 80220
Cap: 866-2909 Res: 322-2611

Tate, Penfield (D) 8 Denver
1050 17th #1420, Denver 80265-1401
Cap: 866-2959 • Res: 320-4665 • Bus: 623-3252

Gordon, Ken (D) 9 Denver
2323 S. Jackson, Denver 80210
Cap: 866-2967 Res: 753-1383

Gotlieb, Dorothy (R) 10 Denver
4123 S. Rosemary Way, Denver 80237
Cap: 866-2910 Res: 770-1841

Saliman, Todd (D) 11 Boulder
701 Pearl St. #3, Boulder 80302
Cap: 866-5524 • Res: 444-0727 • Bus: 449-0858

Swenson, Bill (R) 12 Boulder
32 Princeton Cir., Longmont 80503
Cap: 866-2920 Res: 776-0846

Udall, Mark (D) 13 Boulder
6255 Simmons Dr., Boulder 80303
Cap: 866-2938 Bus: 494-9637

Tupa, Ron (D) 14 Boulder
70 S. Boulder Cir. #7031, Boulder 80303
Cap: 866-2915 Res: 494-6791

May, Ron (R) 15 El Paso
4980 Daybreak Cir. N, Colorado Springs 80917
Cap: 866-5525 Res: 719-591-8620

Sinclair, William (R) 16 El Paso
3007 Chelton Dr., Colo. Springs 80909
Cap: 866-2965 Res: 719-8691

McElhany, Andy (R) 17 El Paso
95 W. Boulder, Colorado Springs 80903
Cap: 966-3069 Res: 719-4739400

Dean, Doug (R) 18 El Paso
6463 McNichols Ct., Colorado Springs 80918
Cap: 866-2960 • Res: 719-598-4920 • Bus: 719-598-2175

Epps, Mary Ellen (R) 19 El Paso
217 Dexter St., Colorado Springs 80911
Cap: 866-2946 Res: 719-392-3861

Lamborn, Doug (R) 20 Douglas, El Paso
1155 Kelly Johnson Blvd #111, Colorado Springs 80920
Cap: 866-2924 • Res: 719-481-3387 • Bus: 719-471-1441

Berry, Chuck (R) 21 El Paso
314 Pine Ave., Colorado Springs 80906
Cap: 866-2346 • Res: 719-634-6328 • Bus: 719-473-3800

Morrison, Marcy (R) 22 El Paso
302 Sutherland Pl., Manitou Springs 80829
Cap: 866-2937 Res: 719-486-0636

Pfiffner, Penn (R) 23 Jefferson
38 S. Zinnia Way, Lakewood 80228
Cap: 866-2951 • Res: 988-3717 • Bus: 233-7731

Keller, Maryanne (D) 24 Jefferson
4325 Iris St., Wheat Ridge 80033
Cap: 866-5522 Res: 741-4681

Grampsas, Tony (R) 25 Jefferson
3237 S. Hiwan Dr., Evergreen 80439
Cap: 866-2957 • JBC: 866-2061 • Res: 674-7883

Tucker, Shirleen (R) 26 Jefferson
615 S. Eldridge St., Lakewood 80228
Cap: 866-2923 Res: 988-0118

Arrington, Barry (R) 27 Jefferson
5622 Tabor Ct., Arvada 80002
Cap: 866-2962 • Res: 420-4655 • Bus: 751-2900

Agler, Vickie (R) 28 Jefferson
10289 W. Burgundy Ave., Littleton 80127
Cap: 866-2939 Res: 973-1987

Paschall, Mark (R) 29 Jefferson
7903 W. 62nd Way, Arvada 80004
Cap: 866-2950 Pgr: 609-4500

Anderson, Norma (R) 30 Jefferson
10415 W. Hampden, Lakewood 80227
Cap: 866-3937 Res: 986-0397

Zimmerman, Paul (D) 31 Adams, Boulder, Weld
12943 Columbine Cir., Thornton 80241
Cap: 866-2918 Res: 457-8464

Reeser, Jeannie (D) 32 Adams
9883 Pearl St., Thornton 80229
Cap: 866-2964 Res: 452-1838

Snyder, Carol (D) 33 Adams
State Capitol, 200 E. Colfax, Denver 80203
Cap: 866-5523 • Res: 452-7043 • Bus: 592-9000

Nichol, Alice (D) 34 Adams
891 E. 71st Ave., Denver 80229
Cap: 86602931 Res: 287-7742

June, Vi (D) 35 Adams
7500 Wilson Ct., Westminster 80030
Cap: 866-2843 Res: 429-1161

Takis, Stephanie (D) 36 Adams
1927 Ironton St., Aurora 80010 • Cap: 866-2912

Kreutz, Martha (R) 37 Arapahoe
6023 S. Bellaire Way, Littleton 80121
Cap: 866-5510 Res: 741-4681

Pankey, Phil (R) 38 Arapahoe, Jefferson
200 E. Colfax Rm. 271, Denver 80203
Cap: 866-2953 Res: 798-5873

Schauer, Paul (R) 39 Arapahoe
7255 S. Jackson Ct., Littleton 80122
Cap: 866-2935 • Res: 770-3872 • Bus: 744-5638

McPherson, Gary (R) 40 Arapahoe
3300 S. Parker Rd. Ste. 101, Aurora 80014-3520
Cap: 866-2944 • Res: 690-8252 • Bus: 369-9902

Williams, Suzanne (D) 41 Arapahoe
12314 E. Bates Cir., Aurora 80014
Cap: 866-2919 Res: 751-2396

Hagedorn, Bob (D) 42 Arapahoe
11633 E. 6th Pl., Aurora 80010
Cap: 866-3911 Res: 367-1994

Allen, Debbie (R) 43 Arapahoe
923 S. Ouray, Aurora 80017
Cap: 866-2942 • Res: 695-4920 • Bus: 360-8515

Spradley, Lola (R) 44 Fremont, Custer
6100 Waterbarrel Road, Beulah 81023
Cap: 866-3540 Res: 719-485-3755

Lawrence, Joyce (R) 45 Pueblo
47 Briargate Terrace, Pueblo 81001
Cap: 866-2922 Res: 719-543-5401

Romero, Gilbert (D) 46 Pueblo
1128 Catalpa St., Pueblo 81001
Cap: 866-2968 • JBC: 866-2587 • Res: 719-544-2420

Salaz, Mike (R) 47 SE Colorado
PO Box 136, Cheraw 81030
Cap: 866-2948 • Res: 719-384-9011

Owen, David (R) 48 Weld
2722 Buena Vista Dr., Greeley 80631
Cap: 866-2943 • JBC: 866-2586 • Res: 970-330-9600

Johnson, Steve (R) 49 Larimer, Weld
5928 Lakeview Dr., Ft. Collins 80526
Cap: 866-2907 • Res: 970-223-8045 • Bus: 970-667-9230

Williams, Tambor (R) 50 Weld
1024 8th St., Greeley 80631
Cap: 866-2929 • Res: 352-2780 • Bus: 970-353-5000

Kaufman, William (R) 51 Larimer
4056 Davidia Ct., Loveland 80538
Cap: 866-2947 • Res: 970-669-4009 • Bus: 970-667-8888

Tool, Steve (R) 52 Larimer
3501 Winslow Dr., Ft. Collins 80525
Cap: 866-4569 Res: 970-223-9003

Bacon, Bob (D) 53 Larimer
1706 Hinry St., Ft. Collins 80526
Cap: 866-2917 (970) 221-4552

Smith, Matt (R) 54 Delta, Mesa
3074 Alegre Ct., Grand Junction 81504
Cap: 866-3068 • Res: 970-434-4727 • Bus: 970-242-2636

Berry, Gayle (R) 55 Mesa
3049 E. 1/4 Rd., Grand Junction 81504
Cap: 855-2908 • Res: 970-434-4121 • Bus: 719-434-9520

Taylor, Jack (R) 56 Routt, Eagle, Grand
Box 5656, Steamboat Springs 80477
Cap: 866-2949 • Res: 970-879-1880 • Bus: 970-879-3600

George, Russell (R) 57 NW Colo
1300 E. 7th St., Rifle 81650
Cap: 866-2945 • Res: 970-625-3778 • Den: 813-9139

Alexander, Kay (R) 58 SW Colo./Montrose
16387 6030 Rd., Montrose 81401
Cap: 866-2955 • Res: 970-249-5862 • Den: 756-8113

Dyer, Jim (D) 59 SW Colo./La Plata
Box 5225, Durango 81302
Cap: 866-2914 • Res: 970-259-1942 • Den: 263-8376

Entz, Lewis (R) 60 San Luis Valley
1016 North 11 Lane, Hooper 81136
Cap: 866-2963 Bus: 719-392-3861

Miller, Carl (D) 61 Central Colo.
111 W. 3rd, Leadville 80461
Cap: 866-2952 Res: 719-486-0636

Sullivant, Bryan (R) 62 Summit, Clear Creek
293 Sherwood Tr., Breckenridge 80424
Cap: 866-2916 • Res: 970-453-4954 • Bus: 303-792-1542

Young, Brad (R) 63 SE Plains
8 Sage Ln., Lamar 81052
Cap: 866-2940 • Res: 719-336-7967

Adkins, Jeanne (R) 64 Douglas
8517 N. Pinewood Dr. Parker 80134
Cap: 866-2936 Res: 841-8829

Musgrave, Marilyn (R) 65 NE corner of Colorado
15484 Rd. 18 1/2, Ft. Morgan 80701
Cap: 866-3706 • Res: 970-867-3245 • Bus: 970-867-4640

Legislature '98

Field Notes by Jonathan Kelley

It's the Suburbs, Stupid!

To some they are oases of calm removed just far enough away from the city to be "safe," but not so far as to miss all the action. To others, they are whitebread netherworlds, just far enough away from the city to be deadening, but not so far as to be get-away spots.

They are the suburbs. And they hold the key to our liberty.

Okay, perhaps I'm dramatizing a bit much. But here are some interesting facts:

• Denver's three adjacent counties, Adams, Arapahoe, and Jefferson, have 1,237,269 people — 37.6% of the population of the entire state — and this doesn't include Douglas or Elbert counties, two of the fastest-growing counties in the country.

• In 1992, each county voted to pass Amendment 2 at about a 55% clip. In an election that we lost by about 100,000 votes, 50% of the margin of loss came in those three counties. In other words, if just 5% (give or take) of the voters in those three counties had changed their minds, we could have defeated Amendment 2 at the polls.

• In the Colorado General Assembly, the three suburban counties are home to 21 of 65 Representatives and 12 of 35 Senators — about a third of each house.

Many of these legislative seats are definitely "swing" votes — that is, the legislators (notwithstanding some Arvada folks) are neither virulently anti-gay nor 100% supportive. One the one hand, the suburbs are not the bastion of Republicanism that many Denverites suspect — suburban Republicans hold only a five-seat advantage over suburban Dems. Yet on the other hand, certainly very few suburban legislators have taken the lead in favor of such issues as hate crimes or civil rights.

Queer political organizing in these areas is especially difficult. Most Metro-area GLBT organizations are based in Denver or Boulder. GLBT folks who live in the suburbs are more likely to "blend in" at home and to come to Denver to get political or to boogie. And the legislature, major media outlets, and central meeting spots are in Denver.

But that doesn't mean that great work hasn't been done in the suburbs. Jeffco Citizens for Human Rights is an example of a group that is working locally to educate neighbors, lobby elected officials, and generally bring the struggle home to western suburbanites. The Evergreen chapter of PFLAG provides a space for parents, friends, and queers to meet without having to make the sizable drive into Denver. A number of suburban high schools are on the forefront of having Gay/Straight Alliances. And Equality's Anti-Violence Project has done trainings with many suburban law enforcement agencies and victims service providers, while Voices of Faith works with a number of suburban clergy.

As the 1998 legislative session dawns and the 1998 elections approach, Equality Colorado sees the urgency of stepping up our work in the suburbs. So many GLBT folks — and certainly large numbers of parents and friends — live and work in Denver's suburbs. Here are some ways we're planning to organize successfully:

• **House parties.** In late January and early February, we're putting together a series of house parties in key legislative areas to educate folks about the legislative process and encourage them to join Equality's Activist Network. This will also be a great way to provide financial support to our work.

• **In-district visits.** The best way to reach a legislator is face-to-face. By organizing in-district visits with a diverse group of constituents, we hope to be able to show legislators the real importance of our issues.

• **Local community outreach efforts.** By locating our suburban soon-to-be-activists, we can better tie people in with their communities and do the education so needed in these areas.

If you live in Denver's suburbs and would like to be more involved in creating change locally and statewide, call me at (303) 839-5540 or email ecjonathan@aol.com.

YOU'VE GOT THE POWER!

CONTINUED FROM P.1

floor vote you want to influence, call your legislator *as soon as possible.* Lobbying is a very time-sensitive business! You may need to call more than once on a bill when there are amendments or different steps in the process.

4. **Be honest.** Power comes from good, solid information presented in an honest way. Legislators count on lobbyists and constituents to educate them about issues on which they are not experts. Power from grassroots support and easily accessible facts can combine for a victory.

5. **Remember the circumstances.** 1998 is an election year. Also, many legislators are term-limited out so many seats are open with no incumbent. Most legislators are obsessed with re-election and dislike making controversial votes. This is especially true among moderate Republicans who often face radical right challengers in Republican primaries.

6. **Remember the "swingers."** The majority rules, so to pass (or kill) a bill, we need 33 house votes and 18 senate votes. The "swing" votes always hold the key to the future of a bill.

7. **Be a pit bull.** Opposition is often tenacious, so we must always be prepared, honest, and tenacious as well.

Think about the power you have as a constituent. It doesn't take a lot of time to write a letter or make a phone call. That investment of time could be what changes an elected official's mind or gives them a new piece of information to consider. Their vote might be the swing vote on a committee or on the floor.

For more information on how to connect with Equality Colorado's efforts, call us at (303) 839-5540 or email equalityco@aol.com

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Child Custody
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Bob Schneider

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AND ASSOCIATES
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Flo Mendez • Patrick Steadman • Fofi Mendez
1370 Pennsylvania Street Suite 400
Denver, CO 80203
303 863 7777

TiMeLine

continued from page 2

1 Melinda Paras and Candace Gingrich.

1 **Amendment 2 is overturned and Equality**
9 **gains steam.** AVP comes aboard. The Activist
9 Alert network expands to over 1200 people
6 statewide. We expand our outreach efforts throughout Colorado to meet with, assist and mobilize individual activists and local groups. In the legislature, Equality supported a hate crimes bill (which died on the Senate floor) and fought an anti-marriage bill (which was vetoed by Governor Romer).

• **January** EC begins publication of the Fact Sheet Series, one-page newsletters providing information on legislation and other activist news. • **February** The Marriage Rights Project sponsored a vigil and a Valentine's Day rally in support of same-sex couple marriage. • **May** The Public Education and Action Committee (PEAC) forms to educate Colorado communities around GLBT issues. The Committee's first campaign, Value All Families, begins and culminates in June with a photo exhibit entitled Love Makes a Family. • **AMENDMENT 2 GOES DOWN!!!** EC organizes a celebratory rally in Denver (attended by over 5000 people) and coordinates several others across the state after the U.S. Supreme Court decision. • **June** EC takes on the Anti-Violence Project, providing services to victims of violence in the GLBT community • EC organizes a mass same-sex wedding in which over 50 couples celebrated their unions. • **July** Voices of Faith, in conjunction with the Black Gay and Lesbian Leadership Forum, sponsors the second annual *Claiming the Spirit* conference. Featured speaker Dr. James Forbes preaches a memorable service. • **August** PEAC sponsors the "Get OUT the Vote" campaign, which includes education and mobilization of voters and the registration of over 1500 voters in Colorado. •

continued on page 10

Beyond Rage and Blame:

Racial Healing in the GLBT Community Town Meeting

Monday, January 19, 1998
6:30 - 8:30 p.m.
MCC of the Rockies
980 Clarkson, Denver

Equality Colorado is joining with La Gente Unida, the Black Lesbian and Gay Leadership Forum, Men of All Colors, the James Baldwin Circle, and the Mayor's Gay and Lesbian Advisory Committee for a town meeting to discuss issues of race and racism in the GLBT community. Dani Newsum, a former civil rights attorney and local media personality will help to lead the town meeting.

ALSO!! Join Equality Colorado earlier in the day at the annual MLK Marade. Assembly time is 8:30 a.m. and step-off time is 10:00 a.m. Look for Equality's rainbow flag near the MLK statue in City Park.

THANK YOU!

Thanks to our fundraising committee! Andy Grant, Mary Ann Guillot, Melinda Higgs, Scott Jeffries, Mitch Keenan, Kris Kailey, Danni Lederman, Manny Mendez, Andrew Montano, Dean Prina, Patrick Powers, and Amy Pulver. Thanks also to Billi Crowley, George Couzens, Dr. Bill Griffith, and Jane Fudge who helped with Celebration '98.

Also, thanks to John H., Dave L., Jeff B., Peter L., Paul B., Allison S., Ellis M., Peter G., and all others helping with Equality's phone tree.

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Denver CO 80203-0265

Guest Column by Christopher Ott

Equality, Not Pride

I RECENTLY CAME OUT TO A YOUNG STRAIGHT MAN who struck up a conversation with me in an airport. He was surprised at first, but he recovered quickly and asked if I would mind answering some questions about what it's like to be gay. I was glad to try, but my answers didn't seem to help. This man's questions were based on huge misunderstandings about homosexuality, but he was curious and polite, and I realized that I had something to learn from him.

One of the questions which troubled him most was why gay people are *proud* of our sexual orientation. He asked this question as if he were asking about something unusual like an illness or a bad habit. I tried to change his mind, but I realized that the language of gay pride isn't reaching people like him because it doesn't do much to change false assumptions. This young man had heard all about gay pride before, but his interpretation remained that gay people are strangely proud of something alien and bizarre.

The pride slogan has served the gay-rights movement well until now by counteracting the shame of the closet, but there are also drawbacks. The problem with pride is that it doesn't state clearly what the gay-rights movement should really be about: equal legal and social treatment for gays, lesbians, and bisexuals. Who cares if people know we are proud? The real point is that we want equality.

The rallying cry of pride may even have helped to provoke a conservative backlash against us. As homophobes hear it, the language of gay pride reinforces the idea that gays are fundamentally different. In everyday speech, people use the word "pride" to talk about things they believe are special, extraordinary, and exclusive. Practically speaking, the "gay pride" slogan emphasizes that we are different, and it doesn't reach people who aren't already on our side.

GAY PEOPLE BASE OUR CLAIM TO CIVIL RIGHTS on the fact that our feelings and relationships are no different — no more worthy of shame *or* pride — than anyone else's. Endless declarations about pride are counterproductive. They suggest that we have something to prove and that we still can't quite put the shame of the closet behind us.

A better alternative to the "gay pride" slogan is "gay equality." What we need more than anything is to emphasize that all of us who are gay -- including drag queens, "dykes on bikes" and other groups within the gay community -- are much more similar to straight people than we are different. A new slogan like "gay equality" would help us do this. It's time for the separatism and exclusiveness which are reinforced by the slogan "gay pride" to end.

We can no longer limit ourselves to simply countering the pride which anti-gay conservatives take in their "family values" with our own declarations of pride. We need to move beyond simplistic arguments that require us to justify ourselves in terms of pride, because pride is not the point. The differences between gays and straights don't matter in any way that is worthy of discomfort, hostility, or unequal legal treatment. In the most fundamental human ways, gays are much more similar to straights than we are different, and as a group we have nothing more or less to be proud of than anyone else.

Christopher Ott is a freelance writer in Denver

Do you agree with this column? Disagree? Do you have a thought or comment you'd like to see in print? Submit a letter or guest column to *The Equal Times*, PO Box 300476, Denver, CO 80203 or email equalityco @aol.com, or fax to (303) 839-1361. We reserve the right to edit or not to print.

Out and About: News & Notes

CHINOOK FUND DEADLINE

Chinook Fund is a progressive foundation that funds social justice issues. The deadline for the next cycle of grants is February 21 — with a maximum grant of $7,000. You can get an application form by contacting Barb Ferrill at (303) 455-6905.

UTAH TEACHER GIVEN GAG ORDER

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) - Wendy Weaver, a school teacher in Utah's Neby School District, has been given a gag order banning her from talking about her sexual orientation. Weaver has taken the school district to court, claiming that the order violates her First Amendment rights.

State lawyers have argued that Nebo's decision fell within its "legitimate interest in maintaining the morale, integrity and public acceptance of the school system and in minimizing substantial disruption or interference in the normal activities of the schools."

The American Civil Liberties Union filed a federal civil rights lawsuit on behalf of the 40-year-old mother of two after she was fired as volleyball coach for being a lesbian, then ordered not to talk about her sexual orientation while working her regular teaching job.

GAY DEMOCRATS HAVE A GROUP, TOO

A national meeting of gay and lesbian Democrats in Philadelphia was held on November 23, 1997, and they announced the formation of the National Federation of Lesbian and Gay Democrats. The group will adopt the same model as Log Cabin Republicans, with a system of local clubs, a full-time Washington office and an annual convention.

THREE LESBIAN IN CONGRESS RACES

Across, the country, three lesbians have announced their bids to be elected to US Congress — retired Army Col. Margarethe Cammermeyer in Washington, Wisconsin state representative Tammy Baldwin, and San Diego councilwoman Christine Kehoe. The trio recently attended a campaign training seminar given by Emily's List, and all three are running as Democrats for seats the Republicans consider "up for grabs."

Cammermeyer is known both for her fight to stay in the military as well has for being the only Congressional candidate to have been portrayed by Glenn Close in a TV movie. Kehoe is running against Rep. Brian Bilbray; she was elected to the San Diego council with 80% of the vote. Baldwin is a highly respected legislator in a relatively pro-gay state.

FEDERAL HATE CRIMES ACT

HRC — The Hate Crimes Prevention Act (HCPA) would protect Americans from most violent hate crimes based on their real or perceived sexual orientation, gender and disability. The HCPA was introduced on Nov. 13 in the U.S. Senate by Sens. Arlen Specter, R-PA, and Edward M. Kennedy, D-MA, and in the House by Reps. Bill McCollum, R-Fla., and Charles Schumer, D-NY.

Act Now!! Urge your U.S. senators and representative to cosponsor the Hate Crimes Prevention Act. Explain that when Americans are targeted for hate violence because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender or disability, they should be included in the basic protection of existing federal laws that are tough on hate crimes. Refer to the HCPA by its full name and bill number: S. 1529 in the Senate, H.R. 3081 in the House.

Call Congress through the Capitol Switchboard at (202) 224-3121. If you are not sure who your senators and representative are, just ask the switchboard operator. You can also send electronic messages to Congress through HRC's Website at http://www.hrc.org. Write to Congress through the U.S. mail as well. Include your name and address, and send your politely worded letter to:

The Honorable _____	The Honorable _____
U.S. Senate	U.S. House of Reps
Washington, DC 20510	Washington, DC 20515

MORE UTAH HAPPENINGS

In December, the Salt Lake City Council passed an ordinance that protects city workers from anti-gay discrimination. The ordinance passed 5-2, but three of the councilmembers who voted for it left office on Jan. 5. Of the three new councilmembers, one is strongly in favor of the ordinance, one is against, and one won't say where he stands.

The List — HRC Polling of Civil Rights Laws

Human Rights Campaign did polling of Christians, asking if they "think gays and lesbians should be protected from discrimination in the workplace."

	All Christians	Protestants	Catholics
Yes:	70%	65%	78%
No:	23%	26%	16%

Trivia answer

US West, Lucent Technologies, IBM, and Coors all grant domestic partner benefits. Columbia, King Soopers, United, Lockheed-Martin, Public Service and Safeway do not.

TiMeLine

continued from page 9

1 October EC sponsors a dinner at the University of Denver featuring the Reverend Mel White.

9 Equality gets out on the road. 1997 sees the expansion of the Anti-Violence Project. The **9** Field Organizing Department put together social events in such places as Delta, Salida, **7** Alamosa and Fort Morgan, and we co-sponsored organizing projects in Greeley and Fort Collins. Grand Junction's Common Decency Coalition restructures to form Western Equality. In the legislature, an employment non-discrimination bill dies in its House Committee; a renewed hate crimes bill passes the Senate but dies in the House Appropriations Committee; pro- and anti-domestic partnership bills both die in the Senate; and another anti-marriage bill is again vetoed by Governor Romer.

• **February** Lobby Day draws 50 people to the state capitol. • **April** The Colorado Marriage Rights Project of EC publishes "Aloha, Colorado!", an organizing manual for same-sex marriage. • **June** EC hosts 5 Legislative Planning Days across the state to plan for the 1998 Legislative Session. • EC organizes Denver's Pride Rally, featuring NGLTF executive director Kerry Lobel and Black Gay and Lesbian Leadership Forum director Keith Boykin. • **July** Voices of Faith hosts the Third Annual *Claiming the Spirit* conference, highlighted by presentations by Dignity founder Dr. John McNeill and the Shower of Stoles Project. • EC sponsors *30 Years After Loving*, celebrating the 30 year anniversary of a white man and a black woman being allowed to marry. • **September** EC begins the AVP Poster Campaign, making posters available to the public for display in offices and businesses. The two posters focus on hate crimes and domestic violence. • **October** EC sponsors JUSTICE NOW, a statewide conference focused on political organizing and attended by eighty activists. • **November** EC hosts the First Annual Ally for Justice Reception honoring Governor Roy Romer. • Voices of Faith sponsors a Western Slope Conference.

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It's been a busy five years for Equality Colorado. These are just some of the many projects and programs that EC has been involved with, and 1998 has more in store. If you would like more information about Equality Colorado and its programs, or would

Upcoming Events Around the State

for a continuously updated list of upcoming Equality events, call our hotline at (303) 839-5540 x4.

21ST ANNUAL ASPEN SKI WEEK

January 24-31, 1998. For more information, call (970) 925-9249, or visit www.gayskiweek.com or aspengay@rof.net

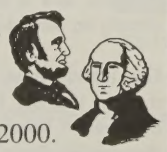
GIRLZ 'N THE SNOW

February 5-8, Copper Mountain. Call (303) 433-9243 or email Girlz@circlesmagazine.com.

TELLURIDE AIDS BENEFIT

February 7-8. Proceeds are split between Western Colorado AIDS Project and the Children's Hospital Pediatric AIDS Program. Call (970) 728-0869 or visit www.telluride.org.

PRESIDENTS DAY BALL



February 12, sponsored by Stonewall Democrats and Log Cabin Republicans. Trax2000. Call (303) 830-8989.

HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN DINNER

February 21, Colorado Convention Center. Call (303) 331-2786. Keynote speaker is Rep. Richard Gephardt.
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Around the State | Southern Colo.

GLBT Directory of Southern Colorado

Continuing our look at the regions of the state.

Colorado Springs

"The Springs" is known for its conservative bent, and rightly so. Focus on the Family and Colorado for Family Values are just two of over 50 religious right organizations based in the city. It also has a large military presence, led by the Air Force Academy, two bases, and NORAD. And the El Paso County Republican Party holds a virtual monopoly on the city's politics. However, Colorado Springs is home to a thriving GLBT community as well. The Pikes Peak Community Center hosts an annual Pridefest downtown; and there are bars and community organizations galore. And with the city in the middle of a high-tech boom, many civic boosters hope the town's hostile image can be toned down. Here are some of the key groups:

• **Ground Zero** Founded after the passage of Amendment 2 with a name to reflect its location, Ground Zero publishes a monthly newsletter, sponsors a number of community events, and works through education and with progressive allies to create positive change in Colorado Springs. PO Box 1982, Colorado Springs, CO 80901; (719) 635-6086; grndzeroco@aol.com. Located at 125 N. Parkside Dr.

• **Gill Foundation** A charitable organization which focuses on funding GLBT, AIDS, and progressive organizations. 8 S. Nevada Ave., Suite 303, Colorado Springs, CO 80903. (719) 473-4455.

• **New Phazes Newsletter** For Colorado Springs' lesbian community. PO Box 6485, Colorado Springs, CO 80934. (719) 634-0236. Weekly

• **Pikes Peak Gay and Lesbian Community Center** Helpline (719) 471-4GAY; email PPGLCC2@aol.com. PO Box 607, Colorado Springs, CO 80901; (719) 471-4429.

• **Metropolitan Community Church** 730 N. Tejon St., Colorado Springs, CO 80903. (719) 634-3771.

• **BGALA/Colorado College** 14 E. Cache La Poudre, CS 80904; rdurff@earthlink,.net.

• **Inside/Out Youth Support Group** Weekly meetings. Call (719) 578-3160 for more information.

• **PFLAG** PO Box 10076, Colorado Springs, CO 80932; (719) 575-8658.

• **Colorado Gay Rodeo Association** PO Box 15504, Colorado Springs, CO 80935; (719) 576-CGRA.

• **Dignity** For GLBT Catholics, their family, and friends. PO Box 1172, Colorado Springs, CO 80901; (719) 685-5343.

• **United Court of the Pikes Peak Empire** PO Box 6925, Colorado Springs, CO 80904, (719) 447-1092.

• **Southern Colorado Intra-Regional Transgender Society.** Call Lisa Jo at (719) 591-5860. Email Lisa Jo 03@aol.com.

ALLIED GROUPS

• **Citizens Project** is a grassroots organization in the Pikes Peak region dedicated to upholding the traditional American values against attacks by religious political extremists. PO Box 2085, Colorado Springs, CO 80901, (719) 520-9899.

• **Southern Colorado AIDS Project** 514 S. Tejon St., Colorado Springs, CO 80903. (719) 578-9092.

Pueblo

Pueblo has a reputation as being a working-class town, built on the steel factory that dominated the town's economy for many years. The GLBT community has really blossomed since 1992. There are two bars in town and the concrete walls along the Arkansas River now sports a large rainbow flag alongside other groups' emblems.

• **Pueblo After 2** This community-based organization has a monthly newsletter, and has started an annual Pride Week. The group also has sponsored a local AIDS Walk for the past several years. PO Box 1602, Pueblo, CO, 81002. (719) 564-4004.

• **Metropolitan Community Church** PO Box 1918, Pueblo, CO 81002, (719) 543-6460.

• **1-in-10 at USC** ASG 2200 Bonforte Blvd., Pueblo, CO 81001; (719) 549-2659.

• **PFLAG** PO Box 4484, Pueblo, CO 81003, (719) 545-7426.

• **SCAP-Pueblo** 2001 Oakland 81004, (719) 561-2616

San Luis Valley

The Valley is a beautiful, very rural area of Colorado, featuring mountain views and the Sand Dunes. It's one of Colorado's agricultural centers, with a large Hispanic population — both locally-born and migrant. The GLBT community there has been working on a phone resource line, and there is a youth-support group that meets weekly. There is also a SLV AIDS Coalition. Call Equality for more information, (303) 839-5540.

Finally, the towns of Lamar, Rocky Ford, La Junta, Walsenburg, and Trinidad all have small gay communitites. Trinidad is, of course, the sex-change capitol of the world. Call Equality for more on these areas.

Fremont County, which includes Cañon City and Florence, is a very pretty area. The county is known for its many correctional institutions, and it also has a lot of conservative churches. Still, there are very welcoming spots for GLBT folks in Fremont County. While you're there, check out these businesses

The Pour House coffee shop

205 W. Main St.
Florence, Colorado

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Notable Quotables

"I grew up in Buffalo, New York. Buffalo is very progressive. My high school had a Head Start Program for Homosexuals. It was called Drama Club."

Bob Smith

"I am not a homophobe...but I insist on drawing lines when it comes to children. They should not be victims of homosexuals who try to worm their way into the humdrum existence of heterosexuals by adopting our children."

Denver Post *columnist Ken Hamblin on gay foster parents*

"Being a lesbian is not an accomplishment. I did not spend over thirty years of my life working my ass off, and trying to become the very best, so that I could be called 'Martina, the lesbian tennis player.' Labels are for filing. Labels are for clothing. Labels are not for people. Being homosexual, heterosexual, or bisexual, is not good or bad. It just is."

Martina Navratilova

"In ten years I see myself in the White House. Before I go there I'm going to insist they paint it pink. Then it'll be the Love House. Talk about decorating that sucker! Miss Thing Goes to Washington."

RuPaul

"You know how everyone has that one special great love in their life? I really think that my last lover was 'the one.' Funny, smart, beautiful, talented. But, God, what a *bitch!*... OK, it was *me*! I don't know how many of you have ever dated yourselves, but it has its good and bad points. I found out that I am not a cheap date. I went into serious debt trying to impress myself."

Matina Bevis

"Do you remember when we all went out to the mall together, and Heather wanted some ice cream? Do you remember how she acted when Mom and Dad told her she couldn't have any?"

"Yeah. She started jumping up and down and crying and screaming real loud... She said you and Mom didn't love her."

"Exactly. Little children sometimes say things like that when they don't get their way. Some grown-ups act that way too, sometimes. Especially some of the grown-ups who call themselves gay."

Exchange between Vern and his son John in the Colorado for Family Values novel, Refuge, *about the fascist state that will result from gay-rights legislation in Colorado.*

"As I get older, my brother and I have gotten closer. He always asks me, 'What role do you play in a gay relationship? Are you the man or the woman?' I say, 'What do you mean what role do I play? I play Patty Duke in *The Miracle Worker*!'"

Jason Stuart

"I would rather you commit suicide than have you leave Love In Action wanting to return to the gay lifestyle. In a physical death you could still have a spiritual resurrection; whereas, returning to homosexuality you are yeilding yourself to a spiritual death from which there is no recovery."

The Final Indoctrination from John Smid, Director of Love In Action, an "ex-gay" group in San Rafael, CA (according to Tom Ottosen, an ex-LIA member).

"Choose Jesus over Mickey"

Sign seen at an anti-gay Operation Rescue protest at Disney World

Trivia

Four of Colorado's ten largest private employers give domestic partner benefits to their employees. Can you name them?

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